

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Test pit excavation within currently occupied rural settlements: results of the East Anglian CORS project in 2014

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In 2014 a tenth year of test pit excavation within currently occupied rural settlements (CORS) in East Anglia was carried out under the supervision of Access Cambridge Archaeology (ACA) directed by Carenza Lewis from the University of Cambridge. The aims and methods of the CORS project are outlined elsewhere (Lewis 2007b) and online (<http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports/cors>). The ACA website includes pottery reports from each site and maps showing the distribution of pottery, period by period, from the prehistoric to the modern, for every settlement where test pit excavations have been carried out by ACA since 2005. Anyone wishing to explore further the summaries in this paper is advised to visit the website and consider the text alongside the maps.

Data on pottery finds from the test pits are submitted each year to Historic Environment Records (HER) in each county. Archive reports are prepared for each test pit which include the finds from each test pit. Conclusions and an overall summary on the results are added when the decision is made that no further test pit excavations will be carried out in that community. These reports will constitute the basis for fuller, formal publication which will take place in due course. In 2014, full reports were completed for Nayland, Southwold/Reydon and Sudbury.

Summaries of the results are published annually in *Medieval Settlement Research* (Lewis 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014), and online <http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports>.

#### 2014

In 2014, 211 test pit excavation was carried out under ACA direction in 18 different parishes, all bar one in eastern England (Fig. 1). Five of these were new additions to the ACA programme, with work in the others building on that previously reported in *Medieval Settlement Research*. Three self-funded community test pit excavation projects (Stapleford, Nayland and Sudbury) and one HLF-funded community test pit excavation project (Southwold and Reydon) added to the 14 HEFA projects.

The majority of the test pits excavated in 2014 were dug by secondary school pupils taking part in the Higher Education Field Academy (HEFA) programme, with the rest excavated by members of the public during community test pit digging events. As in previous years, for reasons of logistics and demand management some parishes where test pitting had taken place in previous

years were not included in the 2014 programme, but may be returned to in the future.

Summaries of the ACA test pit excavations in 2014 are presented below. Sites are listed in alphabetical order by county and then by parish. Introductions to each settlement are included when reporting on that place for the first time. In the case of those places previously excavated by ACA and reported on in this journal, the account presented here provides an update to those earlier reports.

#### Bedfordshire

##### Riseley, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 042628)

Riseley lies c. 16 km north of Bedford and c. 40 km east of Northampton between 50–60 m aOD (above Ordnance Datum) on the watershed of the River Great Ouse which curves around the village to its south and east. The settlement of Riseley today takes the form of a linear row more than 1.5 km long arranged either side of the southwest-northeast orientated High Street. Further housing is arranged either side of Gold Street which runs perpendicular to and north of High Street before turning south-west to become Rotten Row, with areas of modern infill in the areas between these streets and along Church Lane. The medieval parish church of All Saints is today somewhat isolated, located at the end of Church Lane which branches northeast off Gold Street. A deserted medieval village is thought to lie northwest of the present village (Beds HER 17089) and the earthworks of a moated site lies c. 500 m north-east of the church.

The first edition 6-inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map shows Riseley in the later 19th century also to have had a linear arrangement but lack the recent infill and display a gap of more than 250 m separating the smaller eastern end of the village along High Street from its central extent, which is in turn separated by c. 200 m from Top End at the western end of the present High Street. Settlement along Gold Street and Rotten Row was more intermittent and only a few buildings were present at either end of Church Lane, leaving the church and adjacent vicarage very much more isolated than is the case today. The parish included a small number of other farms including several named as lodges and at least two moats, and was traversed by a dense network of footpaths. The overall character in the 19th century was somewhat more dispersed than in the early 21st century, although the settlement had an overall nucleated character with most habitation sited along High Street.

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Figure 1 Map of Eastern England showing the locations of the CORS investigated by the HEFA project in East Anglia in 2013–14.

Nine test pits were excavated in Riseley in 2014 (Fig. 2). No material predating the late Anglo-Saxon was found, but RIS/14/05, south of Gold Street near the point where it joins Church Lane, yielded nine sherds of Stamford Ware and St Neots Ware which may date to this period and certainly predate the mid-12th century AD, indicating contemporary habitation in the vicinity. Sufficient amounts of pottery to indicate habitation in the high medieval period were found in all the pits excavated along Rotten Row, Gold Street and at the eastern end of the High Street, suggesting the settlement expanded considerably in the 13th–14th centuries. Dating to the late medieval period, a very large amount of late medieval pottery was found from several test pits, notably RIS/14/02 (towards the eastern end of High Street) and RIS/14/06 (on the north side of Rotten Row, which produced more than 200/300 sherds (respectively) of late medieval oxidised wares. These were interpreted as indicative of late medieval pottery production in the immediately vicinity of each of these two sites, adding to known evidence for medieval pottery kilns in Riseley including on site at 76 High Street (Beds HER1404). Much less pottery of post-

medieval date was found, suggesting that at some point after the potteries ceased production, the settlement fell into decline.

#### Shefford, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 142391)

13 test pits were excavated in Shefford in 2014 (Fig. 3), adding to the six completed in 2012 making a total of 19. As in 2012, very little pottery pre-dating c. 1800 AD was recovered from any of the pits. The earliest sherds recovered date to the high medieval period, but SHE/14/05 and SHE/14/06, both east of the river north of Southbridge Street, were the only pits to produce more than a single sherd and these yielded only four and two sherds respectively. This hints at the possibility of settlement in the vicinity, but does not constitute compelling evidence for this. A single large sherd (53 g) of high medieval pottery from SHE/14/11, immediately east of North Bridge, was the only other find of medieval date from Shefford in 2014. This appeared likely to be residual in modern deposits probably incorporated during either river dredging or construction of the adjacent building.

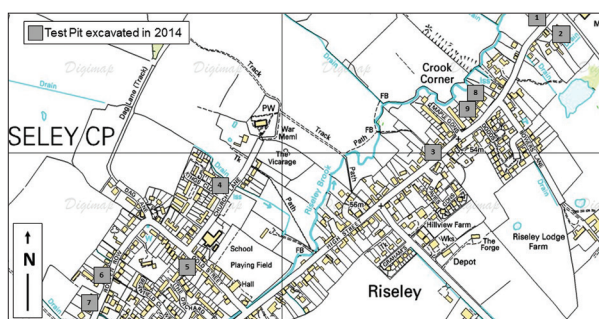


Figure 2 Riseley, Bedfordshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

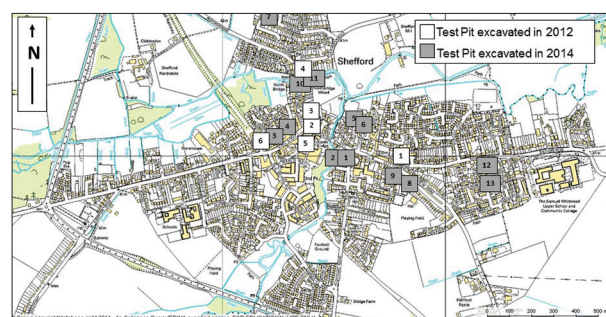


Figure 3 Shefford, Bedfordshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

## Cambridgeshire

### Rampton, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 542267)

Rampton lies at c. 5 m OD on the southern edge of the Cambridgeshire Fens less than 10 km north of Cambridge, on Kimmeridge Clay to the south and east and Ampthill Clay to the north and west. The village today is a small nucleated settlement arranged around a central triangular village green, with further habitation along High Street and King, both running west out of the village, and Cow Lane, extending north out of the village. The church lies on the eastern margin of the present settlement, beyond which earthworks attest to the presence of formerly more extensive settlement in this area.

The first edition 6-inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map shows Rampton in the 19th century to have had a very regular plan, with long reverse-S shaped tofts extending back from properties along King Street forming a regular block, suggesting they had been laid out over medieval arable. There were no buildings at all along Cow Lane, which lead out onto the fen and terminates there. Buildings west of the church were mostly associated with Manor Farm, immediately south-west of the church, while earthworks there were clearly depicted as a large moated site. The parish included few other farms and no hamlets and overall had a very nucleated character.

10 test pits were excavated in Rampton in 2014 (Fig. 4). The earliest pottery recovered dates to the Roman period, with five sherds of this found from RAM/14/10, along Cow Lane. This was however the only test pit to produce material of this date, and the sherds were generally very small (weighing just 12 g in total), suggesting that this area may have been in non-intensive use, perhaps as arable fields in the Roman period or was adjacent to settlement and then subsequently cultivated over a sustained period of time. The deepest excavated context produced only material of this date, hinting at the possibility that undisturbed Roman-period deposits may survive here. Moving forward in time, test pit RAM/14/04 along King Street, was the only one to produce pottery possibly pre-dating the Norman Conquest: a single sherd of St Neots ware: the absence of high medieval pottery from this test pit makes an early date more likely. Test pits RAM/14/03, RAM/14/05, RAM/14/06, RAM/14/07 and RAM/14/08 all produced pottery of high medieval date, although only RAM/14/06 and RAM/14/07 (sited

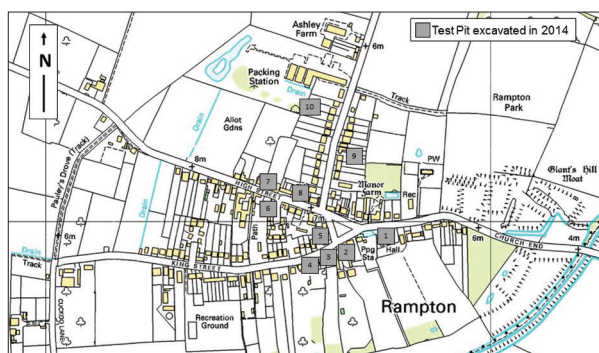


Figure 4 Rampton, Cambridgeshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

close together on opposite sides of the High Street) did so in quantities sufficient to infer habitation in the vicinity with any confidence.

RAM/14/07 was the only site to produce more than one or two sherds of late medieval pottery, hinting at the possibility that Rampton was severely reduced in size after the 14th century. The small amount of pottery of medieval date from any of the pits along King Street suggested this area may have remained in use as fields throughout the medieval period, perhaps only incorporated into the settlement in the 18th or early 19th century.

### Sawtry, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 167837)

Sawtry today is a large village situated 13 km north of Huntingdon and 15 km south of Peterborough lying on Oxford Clay between 10 m and 15 m aOD adjacent to the A1 which follows the line of the Roman road, Ermine Street. Sawtry today is a large nucleated settlement covering more than 1.2 km<sup>2</sup>, all lying west of the parish church on the edge of the present settlement, which is now centred around the large secondary school site. A small triangular green is present c. 500 m south-west of the church and is linked to it by two curving roads, Church Street and Tinkers Lane which, along with High Street which runs north from The Green, form a large D-shaped circuit.

The first edition 6-inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map shows Sawtry in the later 19th century to have been much smaller, covering less than 0.15 km<sup>2</sup> and much more dispersed, with much of the present habitation clearly dating to the 20th century. The 19th century settlement was arranged as a double row of regular planned appearance along High Street, and more intermittently and less regularly along Church Street, with a small number of properties along Winkers Lane. In the area around the church was an uninhabited moat north of Manor Farm and a very small discrete hamlet, Chapel End, with another uninhabited moat to the north-east. South of The Green settlement was very intermittently strung out along Green End Road, leading south-east towards Green End, which was another discrete settlement. A small number of properties here were arranged intermittently along a road whose marked dog-leg line hints strongly at the former presence of a large triangular green. St Judith's Lane led south again to Manor Farm, then in the separate parish of Sawtry St Judith.

12 test pits were excavated in Sawtry in 2014 (Fig. 5). The earliest pottery recovered dates to the Roman period, but this amounted to just a single tiny (1 g) sherd, found in SAW/14/02, the southern-most of the pits excavated in 2014 sited along Green End Road about 1 km south of The Green. Likewise, only one pit, SAW/14/06, produced material possibly dating to the late Anglo-Saxon period, but this amounted to a slightly more substantial total of three sherds and seems more likely to indicate more intensive activity such as settlement in the vicinity. This pit was located on Fen Lane in the back garden of one of a row of mid-20th century houses in an area entirely devoid of housing in the 19th century.

Five pits produced pottery of high medieval date, although the only ones with more than a single sherd



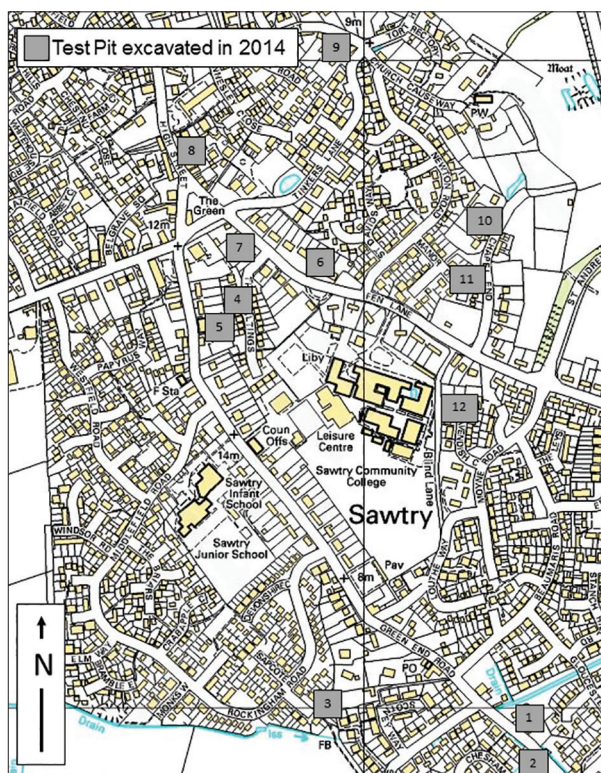


Figure 5 Sawtry, Cambridgeshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

were all in the area south of the church and east of the green: SAW/14/06 on Fen Lane, and SAW/14/10 and SAW/14/11, both along the lane leading to Chapel End. A total of five pits also produced late medieval pottery, including SAW/14/06, SAW/14/10 and SAW/14/11, which suggests some degree of continuity with the high medieval period, although the numbers of sherds recovered remains, as in the high medieval period, relatively modest, with no pits producing more than five sherds. The Fen Lane site (SAW/14/06) appears to have been abandoned in the post-medieval period, with continuing settlement indicated at SAW/14/01 on Green End Road, SAW/14/09 on High Street just north of The Green and at SAW/14/10 at Chapel End.

#### Stapleford, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 473517)

Four test pits were excavated by local residents in Stapleford in 2014 (Fig. 6), as a community follow-up to the nine excavated during a HEFA in 2013, bringing the total to 13. Three of the pits (STA/14/01, STA/14/03 and STA/14/04), all in the eastern half of the area encompassed by the excavations, produced pottery of Romano-British date, although only one (STA/14/04) produced more than a single sherd, and this only yielded two sherds. Pottery of this date in STA/14/01 and STA/14/04 was found in contexts with little or no later material, suggesting these may have been in use as arable rather than settlement at this time.

The only pit to produce more than two sherds of medieval pottery was STA/14/02, which yielded two

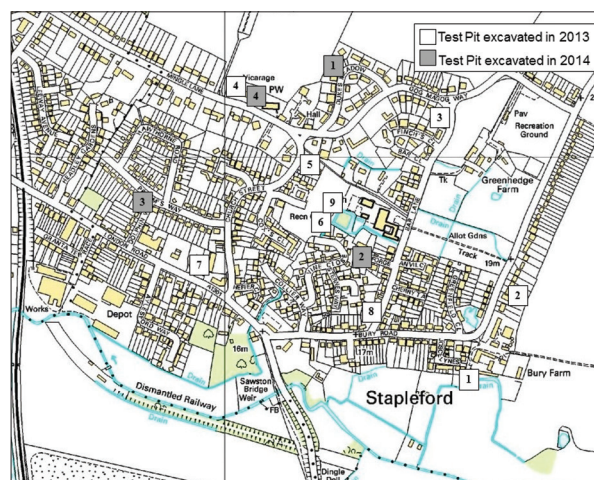


Figure 6 Stapleford, Cambridgeshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery and more than 40 of high medieval date, clearly indicating habitation in the immediate vicinity which may have started as early as c. 1100 AD, possibly earlier. This appears to have ceased by c. 1400 AD, with just two late medieval sherds found and none of post-medieval date. Combined with the evidence recovered from test pits excavated in 2014, it seems that Stapleford in the medieval period was a small place, possibly constituting a small hamlet or a series of scattered cottages or farmsteads.

#### Essex

##### Daws Heath, Essex (NGR TL 813886)

11 test pits were excavated at Daws Heath in 2014 (Fig. 7) by HEFA students and local historical society members, adding to the 12 excavated in 2013 to bring the total to 23. Sites explored in 2014 were intended to fill gaps in the 2013 coverage, especially on the eastern side of the present settlement. As in 2013, very little few identifiably pre-modern pottery was recovered from any of the test pits, although several pits produced worked flint, especially on the northern side of the present settlement along Daws Heath Road, supporting the inference made in 2013 that this area was exploited in the prehistoric period. Just two pits produced any pottery of high medieval date, with a single sherd found in DHE/14/02 and three in DHE/14/03, both along Daws



Figure 7 Daws Heath, Essex, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.



Heath Road some 500 m west of the present centre of the settlement. Such numbers of sherds are not enough to confidently infer settlement nearby, although the fact that these two pits are located in the same area makes it more likely that they relate to some more intensive activity. No material of late medieval date was found from any of the pits, while post-medieval pottery was found in small amounts in pits DHE/14/01, DHE/14/04, DHE/14/05, DHE/14/06 and DHE/14/08. All these, with the exception of DHE/14/01, lie in the main 'triangle' of the current settlement, although the small numbers of sherds (nine in total) do not indicate any intensive settlement activity in the vicinity. This supported the observations made in 2013 that activity on the site of the present Daws Heath remained minimal and sparse until the later 19th or early 20th century.

#### Manuden, Essex (NGR TL 495265)

Ten more test pits were excavated in Manuden in 2014, bringing the total to 28 (Fig. 8). Attention focussed on filling in gaps left from previous years, with three new sites, Broome Cottage (MAN/14/10) The Hall (MAN/14/2) and Down Cottages (MAN/14/01) added. Two pits (MAN/14/05 and MAN/14/06) produced material possibly dating to the late Anglo-Saxon period. These sites were located close to the church, thus reinforcing observations in 2013 that the earliest settlement at Manuden appears to have clustered tightly around the church. An *in situ* supine west-east orientated human skeleton partially exposed in MAN/14/05 may have been of late Anglo-Saxon or medieval date, but was a notable find from a site now separated from the nearby church by the main village street. The same two pits also produced large numbers of sherds of high medieval date, indicating settlement in the near vicinity. MAN/14/08 and MAN/14/09, on the south-west of the present village along Mallows Green Road, both produced smaller numbers of sherds (between two and four) which cannot be inferred with confidence to indicate settlement nearby, and may relate to use of this area as arable. MAN/14/04, MAN/14/05, MAN/14/06 and MAN/14/09 produced small amounts of late medieval pottery, none amounting to more than three sherds. Thus while the number of sites producing pottery does not decline significantly after the 14th century, the volume of pottery recovered certainly does so.

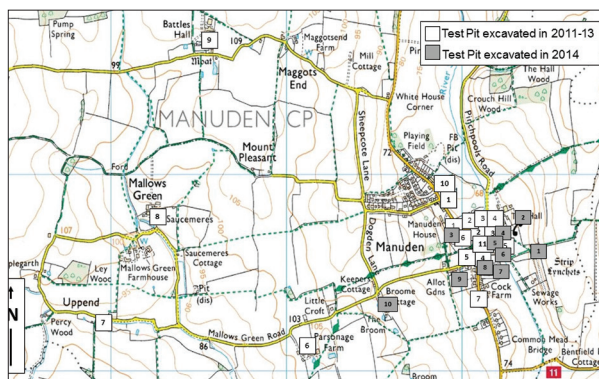


Figure 8 Manuden, Essex, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

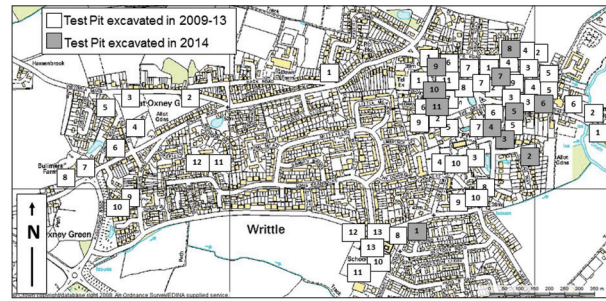


Figure 9 Writtle, Essex, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

#### Writtle, Essex (NGR TL 675065)

A further 11 test pits were excavated in a seventh year of excavation at Writtle in 2014, bringing the total to 57 (Fig. 9). A single sherd of Thetford Ware found associated with the green reinforced the pattern, noted in earlier years, that little material of this date is present under the existing settlement of Writtle, as is the case with most of the Essex settlements where test pit excavations have taken place. Six pits produced high medieval pottery, but only at WRI/14/09 and WRI/14/10, both on or near the green was this present in sufficient numbers to tentatively infer settlement nearby. Five pits produced late medieval pottery, four in quantities sufficient to confidently infer settlement nearby, with particularly large quantities (15 and 29 sherds respectively) found in WRI/14/10 and WRI/14/11. This reinforces earlier indications that there is no late medieval decline in pottery yields, and in terms of the number of sherds recovered, there is in fact an increase. With the exception of WRI/14/09, WRI/14/10 and WRI/14/11, less post-medieval pottery was found than in previous years.

#### Hampshire

##### North Warnborough (NGR SU 731515)

10 test pits were excavated in North Warnborough in 2014, adding to those excavated in 2013 and bringing the total to 21 (Fig. 10). The focus in 2014 was on the southern part of the present settlement, which had seen little investigation in 2013. Although appearing from 19th century maps and observation of housing stock to be of mostly modern date, this area produced the oldest archaeological evidence recovered from the 2014 test pits in the village, including a rare find of Bronze Age pottery from NWA/14/01 on Dunleys Hill (an area which also produced worked flint) and four sherds of pottery of Roman date from NWA/14/03 along Queen's Road. Seven pits produced pottery of high medieval date (NWA/14/01, NWA/14/03, NWA/14/04, NWA/14/05, NWA/14/06, NWA/14/07 and NWA/14/10), the majority (bar NWA/14/10) in the south of the present village, but none produced more than 2-4 sherds, suggesting that this part of the landscape is likely to have been in use as arable fields rather than settlement at this time. Three pits produced late medieval pottery, but none more than a single sherd suggesting that these sites were unlikely to have been used for habitation at this time. In contrast, nearly all the pits (bar NWA/14/02 and NWA/14/04)

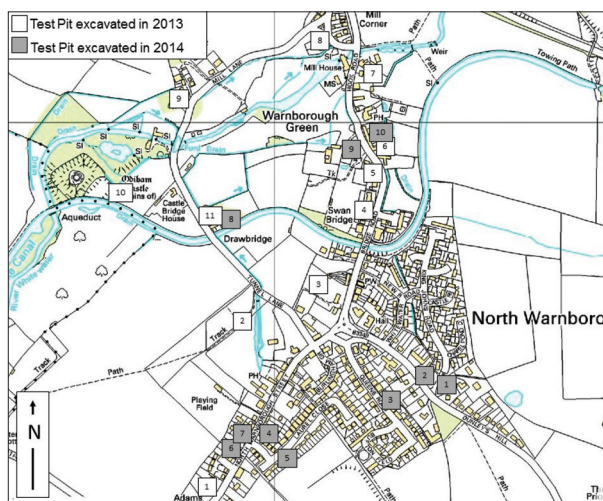


Figure 10 North Warnborough, Hampshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

produced quantities of post-medieval pottery likely to indicate settlement nearby.

## Hertfordshire

### Great Amwell, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 372125)

12 test pits were excavated at Great Amwell in 2014, bringing the total to 23 (Fig. 11). As in 2013, notably little archaeological material was found. However, GAM/14/07 produced a rare discovery of two sherds of Iron Age pottery, with nearby GAM/14/08 producing an additional sherd of the same date, all from undisturbed contexts containing no later material. These finds complement the single sherd of this date found nearby in 2013 and it now seems clear that a settlement of some sort probably lay in the vicinity, with undisturbed

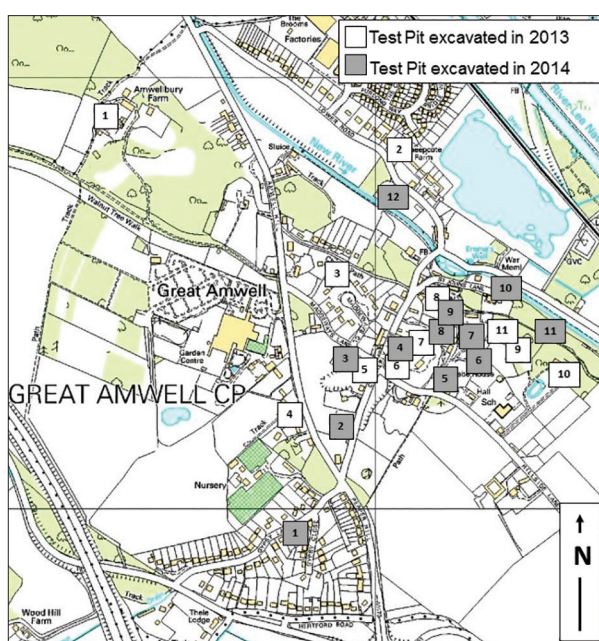


Figure 11 Great Amwell, Hertfordshire, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

deposits, possibly including features, likely to be present. Two sherds of Romano-British pottery, also from undisturbed contexts in GAM/14/07, suggest this activity may have continued into the Roman period. Otherwise, material of pre-modern date was scarce, with pottery high medieval date found in just three pits. This amounted to just a single sherd from GAM/14/11 but larger amounts were found in GAM/14/04 and GAM/14/12 (10 and five sherds respectively). These sites are the nearest of those excavated in 2014 to the valley Lea, and hint at the possibility that settlement in the high medieval period favoured the valley side, although medieval deposits here are very likely to have been disturbed by the construction of the New River in the 17th century.

GAM/14/12 was the only pit to produce any late medieval pottery, amounting to just four small sherds (totalling just 9 g), tentatively hinting at the possibility that activity continued here after the 14th century. Little post-medieval pottery was found, suggesting that most of the excavated sites did not come into habitation which sustained to the present day until the 19th or 20th century.

## Norfolk

### Acle, Norfolk (NGR TG 405105)

Ten pits were excavated at Acle in 2014, bringing the total to 45 (Fig. 12). Attention was focussed on the centre of the present settlement around a triangular arrangement of streets which has seen fewer test pits. Romano-British pottery was found in three pits (ACL/14/02, ACL/14/03 and ACL/14/06, all sited close together around the western edge of the triangle, although only ACL/14/06 produced more than a single sherd, suggesting that this area probably did not lie at the heart of a significant Roman-period settlement, but may have been in less

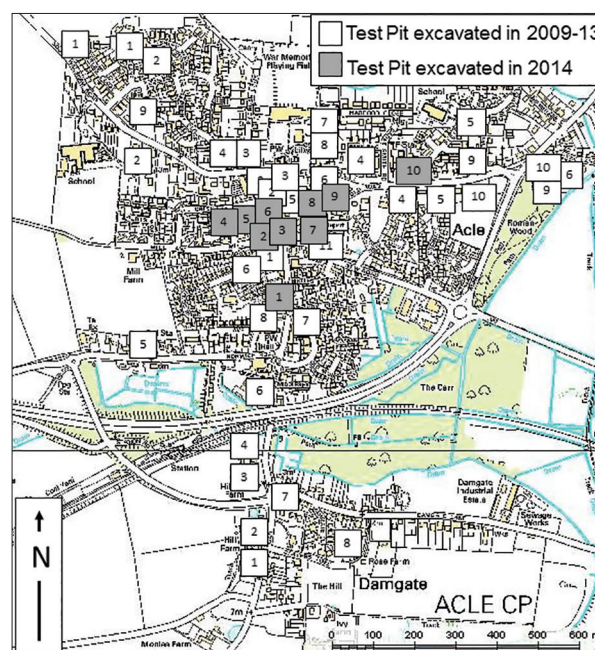


Figure 12 Acle, Norfolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.



intensive use, perhaps as arable, at that date. Seven sherds of Thetford Ware, possibly of pre-Norman date but found in association with high medieval pottery suggesting they may be later 11th century date, was found in ACL/14/02, enough to infer contemporary settlement was present in the vicinity, with smaller amounts (three sherds) in nearby ACL/14/03 giving some support to this inference. Combined with data from previous years, it seems that this area does appear to represent the earliest area of medieval settlement at Acle. Single sherds from ACL/14/01 and ACL/14/09 from north and east of this location may represent pottery removed from this settlement, possibly with manure spread onto arable.

Six pits produced high medieval pottery, but only ACL/14/02 and ACL/14/03 did so in quantities sufficient to infer settlement, with smaller amounts from the other pits more likely to indicate less intensive use. Pits ACL/14/02 and ACL/14/03 also produced late medieval pottery, although in smaller amounts, as did ACL/14/05 and ACL/14/06, all derived from in the same part of the present village around the triangular street plan.

### Garboldisham, Norfolk (NGR TM 005815)

Ten test pits were excavated in Garboldisham in 2014, adding to those completed in previous years and bringing the total to 44 (Fig. 13). Some gaps in previous coverage will filled, while new areas were located on the north and west of the present village, and to its south in the hamlet of Smallworth.

The earliest pottery recovered was of Bronze Age date, with a 13 g sherd recovered from an undisturbed context in GAR/14/02, towards the north of the present village in the area of the now-disused church. This pit also produced four sherds of Romano-British pottery, with material from the same period recovered from pits GAR/14/03 and GAR/14/05. The latter produced three large sherds (76 g total weight) from a context containing no later material, so it seems likely there are undisturbed deposits of Roman date in the vicinity.

Two pits produced Thetford Ware, with just a single sherd in GAR/14/02 but a more substantial number (12

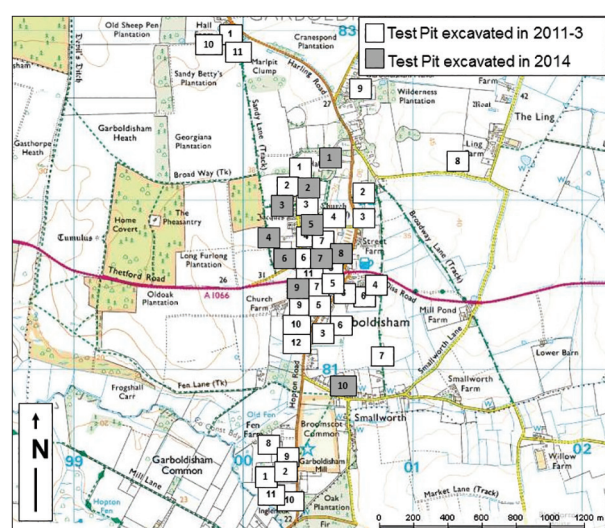


Figure 13 Garboldisham, Norfolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

sherds) in GAR/14/07, which can be confidently inferred as indicative of settlement near this pit which was close to the current parish church. Habitative volumes of pottery of high medieval date were recovered from undisturbed contexts in GAR/14/01 and GAR/14/07. These are located some distance apart suggesting either a large settlement or two separate foci, with the latter seeming more likely when the results of excavations in previous years are taken into account. As in previous years, very little later medieval material was recovered, with just three pits producing pottery of this date, none of which yielded more than a single sherd. The impression that Garboldisham suffered a serious setback in the later medieval period, is given some support by the marked lack of spatial continuity between the high medieval and post-medieval: those pits which produced larger amounts of post medieval pottery (GAR/14/3, GAR/14/6 and GAR/14/9) produce little or no high medieval material, and vice versa.

### Hindringham, Norfolk (NGR TF 984364)

11 test pits were excavated in Hindringham in 2014, adding to the 11 completed in 2007 bringing the total to 22 (Fig. 14). Attention focussed on some areas not previously excavated, south-west of the parish church along Blacksmiths Lane, in the south of the present settlement along The Street, and a small cluster of properties c. 500 m to the north of the present settlement at Crossfield/The Knoll.

The earliest pottery recovered was a 10 g sherd of Roman date, found in HIN/14/11 on the southern side of the present village. It is difficult to interpret this but a single sherd of this size cannot be used to infer settlement and may derive from non-intensive use of the site. Test pit HIN/14/08 produced a rare find of early middle Anglo-Saxon pottery, from a test pit along The Street some 500 m south of the church. Pottery of this date is uncommon and so it is tempting to infer this may relate to settlement nearby, although impossible to be certain about this. Thetford Ware was recovered from seven of the eleven pits excavated in 2014 (HIN/14/02, HIN/14/04, HIN/14/06, HIN/14/07, HIN/14/08, HIN/14/09 and HIN/14/11), an unusually high percentage. Two pits (HIN/14/04 and HIN/14/11) produced habitative numbers of sherds, from sites



Figure 14 Hindringham, Norfolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

c. 500 m apart suggesting either a very large nucleated settlement or a dispersed pattern. Given the later and present settlement pattern, the latter seems more likely. The scatter of smaller numbers of contemporary sherds from the other pits may reflect the intensity of settlement at Hindringham, or its importance in the late Anglo-Saxon period.

Eight pits produced pottery of high medieval date, with HIN/14/04, HIN/14/07, HIN/14/08 and HIN/14/11 all yielding volumes sufficient to indicate habitation in the vicinity. These pits are sited in two discrete locations, two near the church and two along The Street. The Crossfield/Knoll area produced only small numbers of sherds of this date, suggesting it may have been mostly arable in the medieval period. Only one pit out of the 11 excavated in 2014 produced any late medieval pottery (HIN/14/06), suggesting a severe contraction in the period after the 14th century.

## Suffolk

### Long Melford, Suffolk (NGR TL 865455)

11 test pits were excavated in Long Melford in 2014 (Fig. 15), adding to those completed in previous years and bringing the total to 58. All the pits were sited in the northern part of the present village, an area less-intensively explored in 2011 and thus filling gaps in previous coverage. Only one pit (LME/14/10) produced any Romano-British pottery, which was commonly found in pits further south in the present settlement, confirming the suggestion that the Roman period settlement did not extend as far north as the area where the church was later built.

Test pits LME/14/09 and LME/14/10 both produced small amounts of Thetford Ware, both from the area of the green where a post-hole containing a sherd of Thetford ware was found in 2013. A further post hole was found in one of the 2014 pits, of similar size and

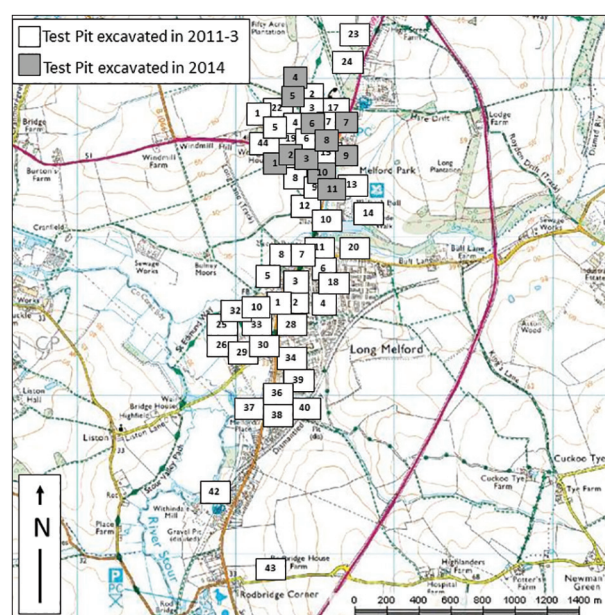


Figure 15 Long Melford, Suffolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

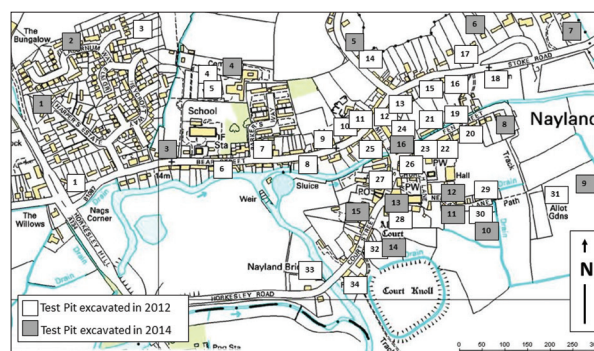


Figure 16 Nayland, Suffolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

depth to this and set back the same distance from the road leading to the church, and inferred as likely to be part of the same building or another of the same date in the same row. It seems clear that there are intact deposits relating to settlement of late Anglo-Saxon origin surviving in this area.

In contrast, only three pits produced high medieval pottery, and none in quantities which would normally be expected were settlement to have been present nearby. Four pits produced late medieval pottery, again mostly in very small amounts, but nonetheless it is notable that, as in previous years, there was no evidence indicating post-14th century contraction in pottery yields in Long Melford.

### Nayland, Suffolk (NGR TL 975342)

16 test pits were excavated in Nayland in 2014, adding to those completed in 2012 making a total of 50 (Fig. 16). One aim of this community project was to explore the centre of the village near the parish church where fewer test pits were excavated in 2012. Iron Age pottery was found in one pit (NAY/14/13) close to the church. Roman pottery was found in five pits (NAY/14/01, NAY/14/09, NAY/14/11, NAY/14/12 and NAY/14/15), but only in small numbers. No pottery of Anglo-Saxon date was found from any of the 2014 pits which gave strong support to the inference made from the 2012 results that there was no extensive settlement at Nayland before the 12th century.

A clear pattern was evident in the distribution of pits producing habitative volumes of high medieval pottery, with all such pits (NAY/14/08-NAY/14/16) located in the eastern part of the present village, along Court Road, Newlands Road and Fen Street. As in 2012, there was no evidence of any late medieval reduction in pottery yields, although there was less evidence for the marked increase noted in 2012.

### Southwold/Reydon, Suffolk (NGR TM 503769)

The town of Southwold is situated on the north east Suffolk coastline, roughly midway between Aldeburgh, c. 19 km to the south and Lowestoft c. 17 km to the north. Reydon lies immediately northwest of Southwold, with the two parishes separated by Buss Creek that encircles Southwold parish from the north and west and flows from the River Blyth to the south. The original layout



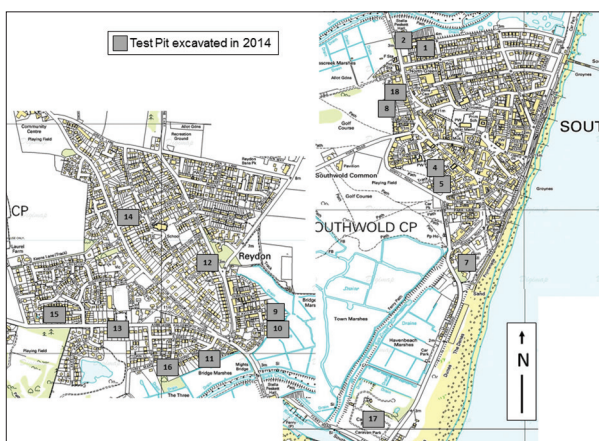


Figure 17 Southwold and Reydon, Suffolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

of Southwold town was lost in the great fire of 1659, but this enabled planners of the 17th and 18th centuries to redesign much of the layout and include more green open spaces. The town today radiates in a linear fashion along the High Street, through the market place and continuing to the seafront. Victoria Street runs parallel to this to the north to form a central triangle, away from which the streets loosely form a grid pattern. Reydon developed as a linear settlement with the church in the far northwest. Much of the initial character and layout of the village has changed or been lost due to the large swathes of residential development that have expanded east of Wangford Road as well as along Halesworth Road.

16 test pits were excavated in Southwold and Reydon in 2014, eight in the former and eight in the latter (Fig. 17). These produced a thin scatter of worked flint of probable prehistoric date whose distribution suggested that humans at this time favoured the areas close to and overlooking the tidal creeks. The test pits produced no evidence for settlement in the succeeding Roman or Anglo-Saxon periods, suggesting that settlement then was likely to be very scant or highly dispersed. The excavations did however show that both the present settlements probably originated in the high medieval period, with that at Reydon initially more substantial than Southwold. Both settlements seem to have withstood the demographic crises of the 14th century and its aftermath relatively well, but the late medieval period saw Southwold eclipse Reydon in terms of population size, a relationship which once established was maintained throughout the post-medieval period and well into the modern era, although Southwold, a popular seaside resort, now has a much higher percentage of non-permanent residents.

### Sudbury, Suffolk (NGR TL 873413)

The town of Sudbury is situated on the Suffolk side of the Suffolk – Essex border, 23 km due south of Bury St Edmunds, 20 km northwest of Colchester and 22 km northeast of Braintree. The town sits within a loop on the eastern bank of the River Stour along the main A134/A131 road connecting Bury St Edmunds and Braintree. The village of Ballingdon, on the western bank of the River Stour was once a separate parish in Essex, but it

is now incorporated into the larger parish of Sudbury as a suburb.

The Anglo-Saxon town of Sudbury was surrounded by a defensive ditch, widely assumed to have been of Late Anglo Saxon construction, creating a D-shaped enclosed settlement. The town was protected on its western side by a diverted stretch of the River Stour and there is no evidence that the bank and ditch continued along the western side. It is possible that there was only one entrance into the town, along present Gainsborough Street close to where it meets Market Hill. In the high medieval period the town extended beyond the Anglo-Saxon town ditches, which were consequently backfilled, probably by the 12th or 13th century. The layout of the town street plan continued to reflect the curved layout of the original Anglo-Saxon defence line, particularly notable along Weavers Lane, Burkitts Lane, Christopher Lane and Friars Street. A second focus of occupation was centred on the later 14th century church of St Peter above Market Hill. This location was specifically chosen as part of a planned expansion after Elizabeth de Burgh after she gained control of the estate in the early 14th century and may have been designed so the great west doors of the church would open out directly onto the market. The high medieval town expansion also continued to the south of the town ditch toward the River Stour, and would have been around the time that the ford crossing on the river was replaced with a bridge. This southern expansion also included the 12th century Church of All Saints. By the early 14th century Sudbury was one of the wealthiest towns in Suffolk, because of the cloth industry. The town prospered through the 15th century, due in part to its location along the River Stour facilitating trade, as well as providing water needed for both fulling and dyeing. Cloth-making was not the only industry at the time in Sudbury (unlike neighbouring Lavenham and Nayland), so by the early 16th century when the broadcloth industry was in decline, the town was able to continue to prosper.

31 test pits were excavated in Sudbury in 2014 (Fig. 18) in a programme funded by local subscription. Although producing a thin scatter of worked flint of probable prehistoric date from the area now covered by the centre of the town of Sudbury, the 2014 excavations produced no evidence for prehistoric settlement in this area, or for any activity, including settlement, in the succeeding Roman period. The excavations did however

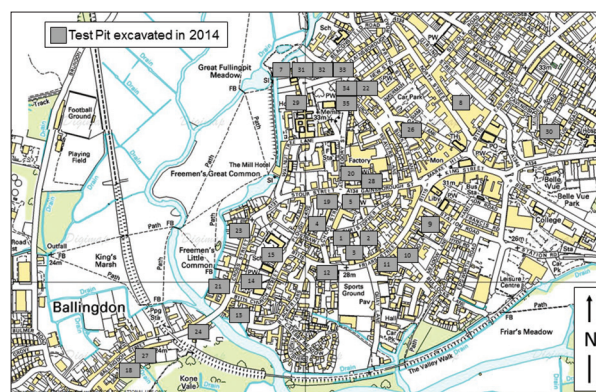


Figure 18 Sudbury, Suffolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

show that the present settlement probably originated in the early Anglo-Saxon period, and was certainly in existence by the 7th century AD around the church of St Gregory. This settlement continued into the later Anglo-Saxon period, when its increased extent can be traced from the test pit excavations, correlating well with line of the contemporary town boundary inferred from the street plan and previous excavations. The excavations also show how and where the town expanded beyond this boundary in the high medieval period. Comparison with other settlements in eastern England where similar test pit excavations have been carried out show the relative regional importance of Sudbury in the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, and also indicate that Sudbury withstood the demographic crises of the 14th century and its aftermath relatively well. Sudbury's extent and prosperity in the post-medieval period is also reflected in the ceramic finds from test pits which allow the location of wealthier zones to be postulated.

#### Walberswick, Suffolk (NGR TM 490747)

Nine test pits were excavated at Walberswick by HEFA students in 2014, bringing the total to 18 (Fig. 19). Single sherds of Romano-British pottery were found in two pits (WAL/14/03 and WAL/14/06), showing no significant concentration or clustering. As in the previous year, very little pottery of possible late Anglo-Saxon date was found, but this was not entirely absent, with three sherds from pits WAL/14/01 and WAL/14/02, both on the south of the present settlement. Pottery of high medieval date, by contrast, was found in five of the test pits (WAL/14/01, WAL/14/02, WAL/14/04, WAL/14/05, WAL/14/06), all in quantities sufficient to infer settlement in the vicinity. Most of these pits were in the eastern end of the present village, between Leveretts Lane and The Street. No material of high medieval date was found in pits in the western part of the present settlement, north and west of the existing church.

The same number of pits produced late medieval pottery, suggesting that there was little or no settlement contraction after the 14th century. However, there are some interesting differences in the distribution of this material, with WAL/14/05 and WAL/14/06 (both along Leveretts Lane) ceasing to produce habitative volumes of pottery while WAL/14/08, immediately west of the parish church, commencing to do so, reinforcing the pattern observed previously that the area around the church came into existence in the 15th or early

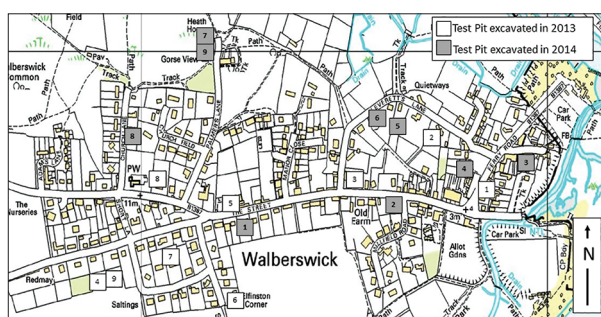


Figure 19 Walberswick, Suffolk, showing approximate locations of excavated test pits.

16th centuries. In the post-medieval period three pits (WAL/14/02, WAL/14/03 and WAL/14/04) produced several sherds of imported pottery, all of which were located in the eastern part of the present village, nearest the sea.

#### Conclusion

By the end of 2014, the total number of test pits excavated totalled nearly 2,000, creating a substantial corpus of data which can now be explored in more detail to advance knowledge and understanding of the development of settlements, landscape and demography over more than two millennia (Lewis 2014a) and show considerable capacity to be usefully explored further in the future. Wider social benefits of the excavations has continued to be felt widely, not only by teenagers talking part in HEFA excavations (Lewis 2014b) but also by local residents taking part in excavations in their own communities (Lewis 2015; Lewis and Ranson 2014a; 2014b; 2014c).

Archive reports have been prepared for each test pit excavated in each settlement and are held by ACA at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge. Details of the HEFA 2014 test pit sites and the pottery reports for each of the sites investigated have been sent to county heritage curators and are available to view at [www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports](http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports). Completed excavation reports (available for 2014 excavations in Nayland, Southwold/Reydon and Sudbury) can be downloaded from the ACA website.

Test pit excavation in CORS settlements in the eastern region will continue in 2015. The results of test pit excavations carried out in 2015 as part of the University of Cambridge CORS project will be reported in the next volume of *Medieval Settlement Research*.

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Jenni French and Trish Biers assessed HEFA students' written work.

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